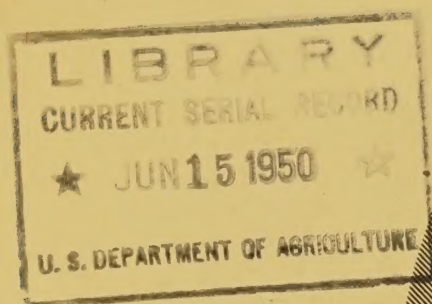


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# CO-OP ELECTRIFICATION ADVISER TRAINING OUTLINE

April 1950



203

**MAKING  
EFFECTIVE TALKS**

**REA**



# PURPOSES OF THIS OUTLINE

This is one of a series of outlines prepared by REA as an aid in planning and arranging training schools for co-op electrification advisers. Each outline deals with a power use subject or with some aspect of cooperative principles and practice or with a particular method or technique of getting information to people. These are the three principal fields in which electrification advisers need to be skilled. Each booklet contains both suggested subject matter and suggestions as to how the material might be presented, with an indication of a suitable time schedule. The booklet is

thus useful as a guide to committees in charge of training schools, as an aid to the instructors, and as a subject matter manual that may be distributed to participants at the close of a training session for study and future reference. Subjects available or in preparation are listed below by title and number. It is suggested that committees planning such training schools keep in mind the need of training in all three types of subject matter and, insofar as practicable, make use of the outlines in a balanced combination.

## LIST OF SUBJECTS

An ORIENTATION OUTLINE (unnumbered) covers all three fields of information. It is to provide the subject matter for an initial school that will give co-op officials basic background information and an understanding of the nature and scope of the educational job to be done.

NO.	POWER USE SUBJECT	NO.	CO-OP SUBJECT	NO.	METHOD OR TECHNIQUE
1	Farm and home Wiring	100	Value of Co-op	200	Getting News to Members
2	Farm Motors		Membership		(Newsletters and State
3	Water Systems and	101	Integrating Power		Paper Columns)
	Plumbing		Use and Co-op	201	Using the Radio
4	Electric Ranges		Education	202	Co-op Reports and Non-
5	Laundry Equipment	102	The REA Program		periodical Publications
6	Poultry Production		and Co-ops	203	Making Effective Talks
7	Refrigerators, Home	103	The Electric Co-op	204	Demonstration Techniques
	Freezers, Walk-Ins		— What It Is	205	Methods and Results of
8	Small Appliances	104	The Co-op Movement		Adult Education
9	Dairying		— Here and Abroad		
10	Pig Brooding	105	Co-op Bylaws	206	Effective Meetings
11	Farm, Home and	106	Establishing Member		
	School Lighting		Ownership	207	Photography and Motion
12	Farm Shop	107	Assuring Member		Pictures
13	Pump Irrigation		Participation	208	Working with Newspapers
14	Garden Watering	108	Co-op Tax Status	209	Exhibits and displays
15	Electric Hotbeds	109	Annual Meetings	210	Working with Rural Youth
16	Elevating, cleaning	110	Co-op's Place in	211	Working with Community
	and grading farm crops		the Community		Organizations
17	Drying grain, hay, peanuts, etc	111	Cooperation Between Co-ops		
18	Heating, cooling, ventilating				
19	Cleaners, dish washers				
20	Kitchen planning				

Suggested

Co-op Electrification Adviser

Training Outline

# 203

MAKING EFFECTIVE TALKS

Rural Electrification Administration

U. S. Department of Agriculture

April 1950





## Suggested Program and Procedure

### MAKING EFFECTIVE TALKS

Much of the work of the Electrification Adviser is accomplished through speeches, informal talks, panel forums, group discussions, oral reports, and conversations. All of these require the careful organization of ideas for presentation and the effective use of speaking techniques in order to make the spoken word mean what you want it to mean. No one pretends that one day's sessions in a training conference will turn co-op leaders into accomplished speakers, but some of the suggestions in this Outline, consciously used in combination with continued practice, should improve your ability to make effective talks on power use and the story of how the rural people of America worked together and brought electricity to their farms and homes through their co-ops and REA.

Suggested Procedure: The following outline shows how this subject might be presented in a one-day program at a co-op electrification adviser training school. The topics would be developed largely through group discussion after brief presentations by persons expert in the various subjects. The outline suggests several devices for stimulating discussion.

Discussion Leader: The day's discussion leader is important to the successful development of this subject. He should be generally familiar not only with co-ops but also with the REA program. He should have had experience in stimulating and guiding group discussions. Someone in the Statewide organization who has the required training and has shown special interest in member education is a good possibility. If you cannot locate a suitable person in your State or region, REA may be able to furnish someone to serve as leader.

Program Chairman: No doubt you will have someone to serve as general chairman for your entire conference. This person -- or someone selected to serve only for this particular day's program -- will be of great help to the discussion leader, particularly if he is an old-timer in the co-op movement.



Suggested Program and Procedure (Cont.)

Subject Matter Outline: Although the subject matter should be developed largely by the group, it is desirable for the leader, as well as the program speakers, to have a prepared subject matter outline as a guide, so as to make sure that no major points are overlooked in the discussion. Such an outline follows this suggested program outline. Extra copies of the subject matter outline for all participants can be supplied by REA. In general, it will probably be found that the participants contribute more to the discussion and get more out of the meeting if the subject matter outline is mailed to them some days in advance of the meeting.

Suggested Program and Procedure (Cont.)

MAKING EFFECTIVE TALKS

Morning Session

<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Speaker or Leader</u>
9:00	Opening Remarks: Statement of purpose and introduction of participants.	Chairman.
9:15	Talk: <u>"The Importance of Effective Speaking."</u>	Prominent community or co-op leader or educator who is himself a good speaker.
9:45	Work Session: <u>"Types of Oral Presentation."</u>  This is a demonstration period. The group considers different types of situations in which an Electrification Adviser will have to speak and tries to determine how the approach and presentation can be suited to the occasion. The Discussion Leader will give samples of radio interview script, formal speech, panel discussion, and other types of speaking to volunteers for demonstration to the group.	Discussion Leader for the day.
10:30	Recess.	
10:45	Panel Discussion: <u>"Setting the Stage."</u>  The panel can represent a co-op planning committee which is arranging the mechanics and preparing the program for several meetings to suit varying occasions. Panel members should meet ahead of the session to agree upon a distribution of points to be presented. Each panel member presents his points in not more than 5 minutes. Audience participation should be encouraged.	Chairman, radio station program chief or community leader experienced in planning public programs, an experienced co-op leader, and a speech instructor from a State college or other school.



Suggested Program and Procedure (Cont.)

<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Speaker or Leader</u>
11:15	Group Discussion: " <u>Common Faults in Public Speaking and How To Overcome Them.</u> "  Participants volunteer points, which are listed on blackboard for emphasis and then discussed.	Discussion Leader for the day.
12:00	Recess for lunch.	
Afternoon Session		
1:30	Talk: " <u>Preparation Is the First Step in Speaking.</u> "	Speech instructor from a State college, experienced speaker from Extension Service, or REA representative.
2:00	Work Session: " <u>Preparing a Talk.</u> "  Each participant actually prepares the outline for a talk on a selected topic. (A list of suggested topics, together with a brief bibliography, is given in the "Subject Matter" part of this Outline.) The talk prepared during this period will be given by the participant at the subsequent Work Session.	Discussion Leader for the day.
2:45	Talk: " <u>Suggestions on Making the Talk Itself.</u> "	Speech instructor from a State college or an experienced speaker from Extension Service.
3:15	Recess.	
3:30	Work Session: " <u>Making a Talk.</u> "  If participants number more than 15 or 20 the Discussion Leader divides them into two groups to meet in a separate room or different part of the main hall. Each participant delivers, in turn, the talk he prepared during the previous	Discussion Leader for the day.



Suggested Program and Procedure (Cont.)

<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Speaker or Leader</u>
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Work Session. Each speaker, upon conclusion of his talk, is rated by his listeners on suggestion sheets prepared in advance. The suggestions are given to the speaker so that he may be aware of his strong points and weaknesses of presentation.

5:00	Summary and Conclusion.
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Chairman.

5:15	Adjourn.
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REA personnel are available upon request to serve as speakers or discussion leaders and to assist in the planning of Training School programs.

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END OF PROGRAM. SUGGESTED SUBJECT MATTER FOLLOWS.





Suggested Subject Matter

MAKING EFFECTIVE TALKS

The following specific subject matter suggestions are intended as a check list to aid the chairman, discussion leaders and speakers in preparing their material for material for the program, and should also be found useful by participants.

Topic I. "The Importance of Effective Speaking."

Success of your co-op depends in large measure on how effectively co-op leaders write and demonstrate and talk to members and others about the job which the REA co-ops are doing. Telling this story and helping rural people to use their electric power wisely are primarily the tasks of the electrification adviser. To do this job you will depend upon effective talks as one of your most useful tools.

Speaking is essentially the art of talking to a group of people in the same manner as you would talk to an individual. Since everyone who deals with people is called upon to talk to different audiences now and then, it is important for you to study the elements of effective speaking.

A. Your speaking ability is important to you and your job.

1. The better you can talk, the better job you will be able to do.
2. Effective speaking is a time saver. With a single speech you can make many people understand and accept your idea through the logic and tone of your spoken word and the force of your personality as a speaker.
3. An effective talk may be the only way by which you can bring about action on your idea.

B. Your speaking ability is important to your co-op.

1. You will be able to keep members informed.
2. You will be able to bring out facts to help solve misunderstandings.
3. You will be able to bring about more carefully thought-out decisions on co-op policy and co-op business.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

4. You will be able to develop among members loyalty and interest in their co-op.

C. Your speaking ability is important to the community.

1. Use effective talks to inform the community about the co-op's objectives, financing, tax status, construction program, and operating policies.
2. Use effective talks to show how the co-op contributes to the community's welfare.
3. Use effective talks to give the co-op an active part in community life.

Topic II. "Types of Oral Presentation."

There are many forms of speaking--ranging from conversation to a formal speech--which can be used to promote the co-op's information program. Selection of the suitable type of oral presentation depends upon many factors, such as: the number of people to be reached, the kind of audience, location of the audience, composition of the audience, how familiar the audience is with the subject, and the purpose of the talk (to inform, to move the audience to action, to stimulate audience participation). Electrification advisers should become familiar with all types of speaking in order to select the speaking vehicle most suitable to the occasion and to the objective in mind.

A. Conversation.

1. This is the most common form of speaking. Although not thought of as public speaking, it is nevertheless a most effective way of communicating ideas to one or to several persons. The informality, semi-privacy, and flexibility of time limits permit more opportunity for a meeting of minds in conversation than in any public speech.
2. No preparation is required for conversation, but many of the suggestions following under Topics IV and VII apply to conversation as well as to public speaking. Anyone who is careful to make his conversation effective (through choice of words, clear enunciation, good posture, etc.) will find good speech habits becoming easier when in front of an audience.



Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

3. Be comfortable during conversation; relax; sit down if that is convenient.
4. Concentrate attention on the person or persons with whom you are speaking. It is not courteous to attempt some other activity (reading, working) while conversing.

B. Floor discussion.

1. When speaking during a committee meeting or other small gathering it is customary to speak while sitting, after being recognized by the chairman. In large meetings, rise to your feet to attract the attention of the chairman and remain standing while speaking.
2. Present only one idea at a time. Get action on one idea before asking for recognition to present a second proposition.
3. Give your reasons for suggesting or believing in your idea.
4. Be brief, clear and concise but state all essential facts.
5. Summarize your points and then sit down.
6. A common fault is failure to speak loudly enough to be heard throughout the meeting room.

C. Impromptu remarks.

1. While sitting in as a visitor at meetings or gatherings you may be called upon to make a few remarks. This is not a signal for a speech. You will rise and speak from your place in the audience unless asked to come to the front.
2. Be prepared. Always keep handy an up-to-date fund of appropriate personal anecdotes, experiences or stories, real or imaginary, with which to emphasize some idea you desire to express.
3. Be alert for opportunities to present an idea that will be appropriately useful to the occasion. Before attending any public assembly it is wise to assume that you might be called upon. Decide in advance what idea would be worthwhile and practical and how it can best be presented.
4. When called upon be brief, be informal, be interesting, be complimentary to your audience.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

D. Announcement.

1. An announcement should be made from the front of the audience.
2. Tell what it is, to whom it applies, where it is, when it is, and how people can get there or do what you are suggesting they do.
3. Repeat the date, place and time, and then sit down unless someone has a question requiring an answer from you.

E. Report.

1. Reports should be made from the front of the audience except at committee meetings or other very small gatherings.
2. Short reports may be read in full. Long reports should be reproduced and distributed at the beginning of the meeting. In summarizing such a report bring out only the key points, particularly those which may require action by the audience.
3. Following a report the chairman will usually ask if there are any questions. Be prepared to answer questions briefly but adequately, and in a courteous manner even though the question be badly phrased or designed to heckle or mislead.

F. Introduction.

1. Introductions are made from the rostrum or speaker's table.
2. Learn in advance the speaker's name, subject, and background of experience and qualifications, so that you can make the introduction without reading from notes.
3. Be brief and don't try to steal the show. The man you are introducing is the speaker--not you.
4. A gesture of applause by you at the conclusion of your introduction will be followed by the audience--and will provide a gratifying and reassuring start for the speaker.

G. Group discussion.

1. Of the various types of public speaking using audience participation, the most informal and at the same time the most difficult for a chairman or discussion leader to handle wisely is the group discussion.



Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

2. Participants are seated around a table or combination of tables, or they may be seated in a semi-circle or circle. The chairman or leader sits at the head of the table, sits facing the semi-circle, or sits at some point in the circle.
3. Purpose of the discussion group is to develop and test ideas and to share information.
4. This is an effective technique for groups including from 6 to 20 persons. In larger groups some persons have no opportunity to speak, and guiding the development of ideas becomes an unwieldy task.
5. There are no speeches made in group discussion. The chairman or discussion leader introduces the subject and proposes a guide or outline. Thereafter his job is to keep the discussion moving ahead from one person to another and from one point to the next without too many tangents from the subject and without domination of the discussion by two or three persons.

H. Panel forum.

1. A panel of two to six specialists with a chairman, and an audience up to 100 is the ideal forum. Panel members sit in a row or semicircle behind a table and facing the audience.
2. Purpose of the panel forum is to develop information about a subject from various points of view. It is especially useful in presenting a problem new to the audience or in considering several possible solutions to a particular problem.
3. It requires careful preparation on the part of panel participants and the chairman or moderator, but none by the audience.
4. No speeches are made, but after the chairman has introduced the subject and the members of the panel, it is customary for each panel participant to outline his view of the subject or present the approach which he intends to take.
5. Panel members develop the subject as a discussion, and members of the audience join in with points or questions of their own from time to time.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

6. Panel members should:

- a. Meet beforehand in order to be sure that all understand the scope of the subject to be discussed;
- b. Agree on a general outline for developing the subject and to avoid duplication of points to be made;
- c. Be familiar with the ideas they intend to present;
- d. Be clear and concise in presenting points;
- e. Be tolerant of contrary viewpoints but not "wishywashy";
- f. Avoid notes as far as possible.

7. The chairman should:

- a. Become informed on the subject to be discussed so that he can recognize pertinent points;
- b. Summarize the discussion from time to time to give it meaning and purpose;
- c. Keep discussion on an exchange-of-ideas basis rather than a question-and-answer show;
- d. Keep a balance between panel members, toning down those who are disposed to talk too much and encouraging reticent participants;
- e. Encourage audience participation.

I. Symposium.

1. A symposium is more formal than a panel forum and generally has a larger audience. There is a chairman and from 2 to 5 speakers seated in front of the audience or on a stage or raised platform if available.
2. The symposium presents more information than a panel. It is designed to give a unified presentation to large audiences and to develop controversial subjects.
3. The chairman makes a brief introduction of the subject at the beginning of the program and then introduces each speaker as his turn comes to speak. He also summarizes at the end of the speeches.



Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

4. At the conclusion of the formal speeches the forum speakers usually ask a few questions of each other to challenge or clarify points made during the speeches. Questions from the audience are accepted by the chairman and directed to the appropriate speaker for reply.
5. To properly introduce speakers and then briefly summarize what they have said, and to intelligently rephrase questions and put them to the speaker who can best supply an answer requires poise and skill on the part of the chairman as well as familiarity with the subject of the symposium.

J. Informal talk.

1. This is the most familiar form of public speech; it is also, unfortunately, the most abused. The common faults are lack of sufficient preparation, poor delivery, and failure to keep within time limits.
2. Arrangements are simple. Someone selected for his known talents as a speaker or for his familiarity with a subject talks with or without notes before an audience and then answers questions if there are any. Purpose of the informal talk may be to present new information, analyses, or interpretation to an audience, or even to entertain.
3. Props such as a blackboard, "flipover" charts, maps, exhibits or other visual techniques may be used to liven up the talk or to drive home key points. Audience participation may sometimes be used effectively by the speaker. He asks for a show of hands on some question or he picks several persons from the audience to help with props.
4. The speaker is assigned or asked to select a subject well before the meeting and is usually given a time limit, which might be from 5 to 30 minutes. Stay on the subject and within the time limit.

K. Radio interview.

1. In any radio presentation timing is probably the most exacting requirement. Script must be prepared well in advance of the broadcast and should be carefully designed to fill the exact time allotted. Be on time at the studio; allow yourself a margin to avoid embarrassment arising out of any unforeseen delay.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

2. Observe the following in preparing scripts:

- a. Type it in full, double spaced, so that it is easy to read;
- b. Write the way people talk, so that it sounds natural;
- c. Stick to one subject; don't try to cover too much ground;
- d. For the benefit of listeners who have tuned in late or who have not been following the program closely, repeat main points in various ways, identify the speakers or organization several times during the program, and summarize in conclusion;
- e. Keep sentences short, wording simple, and use ratios, proportions and comparisons rather than complicated statistics;
- f. In an interview script, hold each speaker to not more than 30 seconds at a time, so that it does not become a speech.

3. The interview is a specialized radio technique in which a question and answer script is prepared. Someone on the studio staff usually handles the questions during the broadcast; you or someone from your co-op may be supplying the answers.

4. Speakers unfamiliar with radio should guard against allowing the script they read to sound as though it were being read. Familiarity with the script and practice in a conversational voice will overcome this hazard.

L. Formal speech.

1. This may be an after-dinner speech designed to entertain, or it may be part of a symposium designed to inform, or it may be part of the ceremonies to mark some special occasion--a local holiday or the opening of a new co-op headquarters building or an anniversary of the co-op.
2. It may be slightly longer than the informal talk, and will probably use less props and audience participation. More careful preparation of the speech may be required. Notes are more frequently used for a speech than for an informal talk, in order to follow more closely the prepared outline or text.



Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

M. Debate.

1. Since debate heightens difference of opinion rather than common areas of agreement and cooperation it is not generally useful outside of the classroom or away from the political platform.
2. The form and technique is well known. Opposing teams of from 1 to 4 speakers alternately defend and attack the subject before an audience which may be of any size. Participants are introduced by the chairman before they speak.
3. Debate probably requires more preparation than any other form of public speaking. Both sides of the subject must be explored thoroughly in order to anticipate points which will be used by the opposing speakers and in order to prepare adequate rebuttal.

Topic III. "Setting the Stage."

Some of the prerequisites for "setting the stage" have already been considered under Topic II above. Physical arrangements and general preparations for a meeting or speaking program can be nearly as important as the ability of the speaker.

A. Responsibilities of the speaker.

1. Make known in advance what you will need as props or special arrangements.
2. Become familiar in advance with the room or area where you will be speaking so that you may feel at ease there.
3. Find out ahead of time as much as you can about the audience (the size, average age, whether men, women or mixed, where your anticipated listeners live, what their interest is in your subject, whether or not they are largely members of the organization which has invited you to speak).
4. If other speakers are on the program, ascertain the other subjects and learn in what order you are scheduled.
5. Be on time at the meeting. Come early enough to meet some of the people who will be your listeners.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

B. Responsibilities of the chairman or planning committee.

1. Adequate publicity to pull a good crowd. A poor turnout is disheartening for any speaker.
2. Try to select a meeting place to fit your anticipated audience. Have enough space to avoid overcrowding and to provide seats for all; on the other hand avoid the lonely, discouraged atmosphere of a large auditorium or gymnasium for a handful of people.
3. If movable chairs are used, an arrangement of semicircular rows is better than straight rows.
4. Proper setting of chairs, tables, lecture stand or whatever is required for speakers and dignitaries to comply with the demands of the nature of the program.
5. Provide such props as may be needed: blackboard, chalk (perhaps colored as well as white), eraser, glasses and a pitcher of water for speakers, a gavel for the chairman, pads of paper and pencils and ash trays. Blackboards, charts and maps should be large and well placed for the audience to see them.
6. Someone should have a watch at the speakers' table so that the time schedule can be adhered to.
7. If slides or movies are to be shown, be sure the projector and screen are set up and tested for proper working order and adjustment before the program starts. Secure an operator who is familiar with the projection equipment. Have someone designated to handle light switches without delay.
8. See that the meeting place is well lighted and well ventilated but adequately heated. Nothing puts your audience to sleep faster than a dimly lit and stuffy room.
9. Does the size and nature of the meeting require a public address system? If you use one test it before the program begins.
10. Have janitor services been provided for?
11. If audience participation is desired it is useful practice to have several friends with differing views primed to ask questions from various parts of the audience to get the ball rolling.



Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

12. Arrangements should be made to assure the speaker's transportation, and to welcome him at the door. The speaker should be introduced to other speakers on the program, officers of the organization, and others. Give copies of the program to the speakers.

C. Considerations in selecting the speakers.

1. Here are some qualifications for a chairman or member of a planning committee to keep in mind in selecting speakers for discussion meetings:
  - a. Special knowledge of the subject;
  - b. Speaking ability (not necessarily a trained speaker but one able to hold the attention of an audience);
  - c. Willingness to submit to questions.
2. Here are some abilities you will want to develop in yourself and look for in choosing someone else to lead a discussion:
  - a. Ability to think clearly and make quick decisions, in order to keep the discussion on the track and to prevent excessive show of temper by participants;
  - b. Ability to be a good listener and to respect the opinions of others;
  - c. Willingness to remain in the background and let others take the spotlight;
  - d. Ability to prevent one or two participants from dominating the discussion and to draw as many persons as possible into the discussion--without too obvious manipulation;
  - e. Ability to summarize a discussion and bring it to a close before the subject and the audience are exhausted.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

Topic IV. "Common Faults in Public Speaking and How to Overcome Them."

A. Ten worst offenders.

1. Talking too long.

If the chairman has not told you how long to speak, keep it within 20 minutes--less if you can. Go over your talk before the date of your appearance to make sure you can deliver it within the allotted time.

When you get up to speak make sure that a clock or watch is within sight, or have the chairman signal you a minute before quitting time.

When you have finished what you have to say, stop and sit down; don't flounder on and on. Usually the poorer the speech the longer it is drawn out, perhaps in the vague hope that it can be salvaged by adding a little more. Someone has said, "If you haven't struck oil by the end of your agreed time, stop boring."

2. Failure to speak loudly enough.

If the audience can't hear you, your speech is a waste of your time and theirs, too. Speak up!

Try out the room or auditorium beforehand if possible. Have a friend stand at the back and tell you whether or not he can hear you. It will be more difficult for him to hear you over the rustle of a crowd.

When you speak, open your mouth, hold up your head, breathe deeply.

3. Poor enunciation.

Speak distinctly. Three common causes of faulty enunciation are:

- a. Running words together. "Whoojer seeter day?" instead of "Whom did you see today?" In front of a mirror at home practice speaking one word at a time, with exaggerated pauses between each word and with exaggerated lip movements.
- b. "Swallowing" words. Some speakers talk far down in their throats instead of against the natural sounding boards high in the back of the mouth.
- c. Half-closed mouth. If you don't open your mouth the words can't get out--and your audience can't tell what you are saying.



Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

4. Hesitation.

Some speakers give an impression that they are uncertain of their subject or of themselves or of the audience by hesitation, by slow speech, by fumbling for words, by repeating "and" or grunting "uh" after each phrase or sentence, or by leaving sentences unfinished.

Some of this is due to nervousness and can be overcome only through practice. Very often, however, it indicates inadequate preparation of the talk or lack of familiarity with the subject. If you really know what you want to say, it will come out with less difficulty.

5. Distracting mannerisms.

You have seen them many times: the "ear-puller", the "pants-hitcher", the "coin-jingler", the "sloucher", the "squinter", the "teeterer", the "windmill" and his opposite, the "statue". Many speakers have some habitual mannerism which distracts the audience from what they are saying.

What particular nuisance do you impose upon your audience? As soon as you have clearly determined what mannerism is detracting from the effectiveness of your talks, you can begin concentrating on its elimination.

6. Not looking at the audience.

Don't stare at the floor. Don't look out the window throughout your talk. And don't keep your eyes on the far wall over the heads of the people who came to hear you talk to them.

Visualize your audience in advance. Find out enough about them to feel that you know them and can really talk to them, face to face. If you do find that you can't keep your eyes on the people, then pick out two or three persons among those in front of you and talk to them. Keep your eyes on them rather than the floor, the window or the back wall.

7. Apologies.

Don't make them. It's as simple as that. If your speech is good there is no need for apology. If you have to apologize, then you should not have spoken in the first place.

As a matter of fact you will find most audiences sympathetic for your shortcomings, but you will embarrass them by apologizing.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

8. Excessive reading from notes.

If reading seems necessary, have the manuscript mimeographed, hand it out and sit down. This saves your time and that of the audience.

The audience comes to hear what you have to say. Reading to them fails to give an impression that you know your subject, that you have prepared yourself to speak on it, or that you believe in what you are saying.

Except for radio script or the most formal speaking occasions you will find it better to prepare an outline of numbered points than to write a complete speech. Practice development of your outline until you are sure you can talk easily on each point. It is easy to remember a dozen numbered points, but keep these on a card if you need them. If you happen to be talking with a flip-over chart, you may pencil additional notes on the sheets. You can see them but the audience can't.

9. Irrelevant jokes or anecdotes.

Humor or a story that really illustrates a point is priceless. Too many speakers unfortunately seem to think jokes have to be inserted into every talk regardless of whether or not they are pertinent. Collecting a fund of anecdotes that fit easily into a variety of situations is useful preparation for public speaking. But don't wear your best stories thin by overuse, and don't use humor at all unless it is appropriate.

10. Tangents.

Tangents run off in all directions but the one you are supposed to follow. Stay with your subject. Don't confuse your audience by taking them down a lot of deadend roads when you talk to them.

Avoid bringing in extraneous points, and similarly, avoid unnecessary detail in developing your central theme. If you are clear about your objective before you speak, you can probably avoid tangents and excessive detail.



Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

- B. There are many more pitfalls, of course. Each person could quickly compile a list of his own pet annoyances from speakers he has heard. It is easier to list the faults in others than to correct them in ourselves. Having recognized them, however, one can practice getting rid of them.

Topic V. "Preparation is the First Step in Speaking."

A. Attitude.

1. Nervousness. Most speakers are nervous before and during a talk. Most of them have gone through various degrees of stage fright at one time or another. Remember this when your own knees grow weak.

This fright can be put to good use. It should stimulate you to prepare yourself thoroughly for the talk. Adequate preparation builds self-confidence and allays the worst effects of nervousness.

2. Enthusiasm. An audience knows whether or not a speaker is sincere. Enthusiasm is not a quality than can be assumed for the occasion. Believing in the things you wish your audience to accept is essential to effective speaking.

Genuine sincerity and enthusiasm often make an untrained speaker more effective than a highly trained person who lacks these qualities. If you cannot work up a genuine interest in your subject, you had better select a new one without delay.

3. Purpose. Speak because you have something to say, not because you have to say something. What do you expect to accomplish by your talk? Will you design your remarks to entertain the audience? to inform them? or to convince and move them to action?
4. Consider the occasion. What brings these people together? You must know whether this is a special event to commemorate some person or event, whether it is to celebrate some development or action, whether it is a routine meeting, or a regular recurring program.

The little informal demonstration you make at a neighborhood gathering on power use will be quite a different affair and require different preparation than the symposium arranged by the State Grange or the after-dinner speech before the Chamber of Commerce at the county seat.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

5. Consider the audience. How large a crowd is expected to hear you? The more you can learn about your audience in advance the easier becomes your task of preparing an appropriate talk. Your selection of words, your attempts at humor, your choice of arguments or points, even the wording of the title of your talk will be determined by consideration for the age, sex, religious background, economic status, education, and occupation of the people to whom you will be talking.

The more you know about your audience the better acquainted you will feel and consequently you will be more at ease when you face them.

B. Familiarity with the subject.

1. No one expects to be an authority in every field. Avoid making public talks on subjects outside your field of experience.
2. As a staff member of an REA electric co-op practically all of your public speaking will be on subjects related to your co-op and REA, on problems of power use and member education.

You will want to be thoroughly familiar and well informed on the makeup and background of the communities which are a part of your co-op's service area as well as of your own electric co-op, of REA, of co-ops in general, and the use of electric power in rural areas.

The more familiarity you have with these several fields of interest, the greater ease you will have in preparing material for talks.

C. Collecting material.

You will need three types of material for your talk:

1. Ethical material. These are points drawn from your own experience and opinions backed by your own good reputation.
2. Logical material. These are points, proofs, and opinions from other people. This is the material that you will obtain from REA and other Government publications, reference books, periodicals, and from interviews.



Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

- a. The public library in any sizeable community will have a wealth of reference source material available to you. Ask the librarian to help you use the Library Card Catalog, the Cumulative Book Index, the Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, and reference books such as Encyclopedias, World Almanac, Yearbook of Agriculture, etc.
  - b. Each co-op should have a library of books, pamphlets, and periodicals covering the field of electric distribution, power use topics, public relations and information techniques, the cooperative movement, development of the REA program and related subjects.
  - c. Electrification advisers, as well as other people who expect to do considerable public speaking or writing, often build up files of clippings from periodicals, quotations, notes and references from various sources, and special leaflets and other material, which is filed by subject for use in preparing talks.
3. Emotional material. Appeals to fear, altruism, patriotism, and other emotional response are sometimes appropriate in talks, but should be used with great discretion.

D. Organizing the speech.

People do not like to listen to an aimless talk. Proper organization of what you want to say will please your audience. You will find a carefully organized talk much easier to give, too. The speech built on numbered points is excellent for the amateur because it is easy to prepare and to remember. It is also useful to the audience, for they find it easy to remember numbered divisions. Your talk falls easily into three parts: a short introduction, a long body or main part, and a short conclusion.

1. Introduction.

- a. Gain attention and interest.
- b. Established contact with the audience.
- c. Arouse a desire to listen.
- d. Clarify the subject, define terms. Be brief.

2. Body of speech.

- a. Arrange points in logical order.
- b. Omit non-essentials. Concentrate on main ideas.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

- c. Be sure of your conclusions. Avoid an impression of hedging or hesitation.
- d. Provide for change of pace, to avoid monotony.
- e. Use some specific examples. Make it personal.

3. Conclusion.

- a. Summarize briefly.
- b. Prepare an effective concluding statement.

E. Practice.

1. Outline on handy 3 x 5 cards the main points and subsidiary points of your talk, starting each new point on a new card. If the main points are numbered "1", "2", etc., you will have no difficulty in finding your place in your notes in case you should need to refer to them while speaking. As you move from one point to the next in speaking, move the corresponding card to the bottom of the pack, even though you have not looked at it.
2. As an electrification adviser you will be using many points over and over again in speaking to different groups of people. Your carefully prepared outline cards on such topics as off-peak use of current, construction of a brooder, the necessity of re-inspection, or the responsibilities of co-op membership can be built into a useful file for talks and written articles that will save you a great deal of time and effort.
3. Instead of trying to memorize an entire speech, fix the main points firmly in your memory. Then practice developing each point in a variety of ways, using different words and ideas, until you feel at ease and familiar with each point.
4. Do your practicing aloud and in front of a mirror. Watch for and guard against distracting mannerisms (scowling, slouching, "deadpan" face, wetting your lips with the tongue, etc.). Try to use a few natural gestures to emphasize key points. Note whether or not you are opening the mouth fully to permit clear enunciation.
5. Practice your talk before members of your family or close friends. This can be as difficult as speaking before your ultimate audience and is, therefore, good practice. Have your practice listeners make suggestions on the contents of your talk. (Are the opening sentences interesting? Is your development of ideas logical? Are your stories new and

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

appropriate? Is your ending strong?) Have them criticize you also on your delivery. (Do you pronounce the words correctly? Do you speak distinctly? Is your voice pleasant to hear?)

6. Be sure that you can complete your talk within the allotted time.

Topic VI. "Preparing a Talk."

By making use of pertinent points discussed above, the technique of preparing an effective talk can readily be learned.

- A. If you are not an experienced speaker, keep your talks brief and limit the number of points. This will help you develop clear presentation.
- B. When invited to speak you will generally be asked to speak on a given subject, but the exact wording of the title may be left up to you. The title is important, particularly if it is to be included in a printed program or an announcement of the meeting.
  1. Keep the title short.
  2. Use familiar but interesting words.
  3. Form it as a question if possible. "How Can an Electric Fan in Your Barn Save Money?" is better than "Installation of Electrical Ventilation Devices in the Barn". "What Will You Own in Your Co-op?" is better than "The Member's Share of Ownership under a Capital Credits Plan."
- C. Most of your talks as an electrification adviser will be on subjects of your own choosing. Here is a partial list of suggested topics and sample titles, together with selected bibliography, to give some idea of the wide range of subject matter which may be useful:

Subjects and possible titles

Area coverage

"What Is Area Coverage?"  
"Is Area Coverage Good Business?"  
"How Much Does My Neighbor's Line Cost Me?"  
"Can All Farmers Get Electric Power?"  
"My Neighbor Wants REA Power, Too."

Reference

"Your Obligation for Area Coverage", Co-op Chat by Administrator Wickard, REA, May 20, 1946; "Area Coverage Is Good Business", Rural Electrification News, June-July 1947, p. 6.



Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

Capital credits

"Who Owns the Co-op?"

"What Is Your Share?"

"What Happens to the 'Profits'?"

"What Does 'Capital Credits' Mean to You?"

"Member Ownership through Capital Credits", Talk by Administrator Wickard, REA, Aug. 26, 1947; "What You Will Own in Your REA Co-op", REA, 1946; "Capital Credits Gain Favor", Rural Electrification News, Oct.-Nov. 1949, p. 3; "How We Set Up Capital Credits", Rural Electrification News, Oct.-Nov. 1948, p. 4; "Establishing Co-op Ownership", Rural Electrification News, Oct.-Nov. 1947, p. 2; "Setting Up Capital Credits", Rural Electrification News, Oct.-Nov. 1947, p. 18; "They Like Capital Credits", April-May 1947, Rural Electrification News, p. 3; "Adopting Capital Credits", March 1947, Rural Electrification News, p. 14.

Community relations

"Do Our Neighbors Really Know Us?"

"Our Place in the Community"

"The Co-op as a Service Organization"

"What Can the \_\_\_\_\_ Co-op Do for \_\_\_\_\_ County?"

"How Our Co-op Helps the Community."

"The Importance of Good Public Relations", Co-op Chat by Administrator Wickard, REA, April 15, 1949; "Helping Your Community Grow", Rural Electrification News, June-July 1948, p. 2; "How Co-ops Can Work for Community Development", Rural Electrification News, June-July 1948, p. 4.

Consumer loans

"Finance Appliances and Wiring through Your Co-op"

"Electrification Loans through the Co-op"

"But Where Can I Borrow the Money?"

"New Loan Program for Consumers", REA, July 1945; "Consumer Loans", Rural Electrification News, April-May, 1950, p. 22; "Consumer Facilities Loans", Rural Electrification News, April-May 1948, p. 10.

Cooperative principles

"What Are 'Rochdale Principles'?"

"Are All Co-ops Alike?"

"What Is a Co-op?"

"Are Co-ops Socialistic?"

"How Does a Co-op Differ from Any Other Business?"

"Why Co-ops?", EM 23, reprinted 1949 by Farm Credit Administration, and available from REA; "A Guide for Members of Rural Electric Co-ops", REA; "The Rural Electric Co-op", Training Outline 103, REA, Sept. 1949.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

Crop conditioning

"Better Hay the Electric Way"  
"Is Electric Drying Practical?"  
"Dry Your Hay in the Barn"  
"Curing and Drying with Co-op Power"  
"Why Is Electric Drying Better?"

"Build a Hay-drier for Your Barn", REA, 1946; "Heat for Farm Production", Rural Electrification News, Oct.-Nov. 1949, p. 5; "Drying and Grinding the Electric Way", Rural Electrification News, June-July 1949, p. 6; "Curing Hay in the Stack", Rural Electrification News, April-May 1949, p. 11; "Looking Ahead in Crop Conditioning", Rural Electrification News, Feb.-March 1949, p. 19; "Dried Corn -- Higher Prices", Rural Electrification News, June-July 1948, p. 24.

Electric appliances

"Are You Getting the Most out of Your Appliances?"  
"Take Care of Your Appliances"  
"Which Appliances First?"  
"How Much Power Do Appliances Use?"  
"Wiring for Appliances"

"Care and Use of Your Small Electric Appliances", REA, 1948; "Care and Use of Your Electric Iron", REA; "Power for Fun", Rural Electrification News, April-May 1950, p. 14; "Looking Ahead in Electrical Equipment", Rural Electrification News, Jan. 1947, p. 6.

Lighting

"How Much Light in the House?"  
"Get the Right Kind of Light"  
"Be Kind to Your Eyes"  
"Are You Getting the Most out of Your Lighting?"  
"Farm Uses of Electric Lights"  
"Is Good Lighting a Luxury?"

"Making Light Work for You", REA, 1948; "...Light in Farm Production", Rural Electrification News, Aug.-Sept. 1949, p. 5.

Other subjects which can be added to this list are:

"Portable Motors", "Safety", "Adequate Wiring", "Member participation", "Off-peak power use", "Taxes your co-op pays", "Self-billing", "Re-inspection", "Water systems", etc.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

- D. To provide yourself with a useful exercise, take one of the topics in Section C (above) and prepare a short talk to fit one of the following situations which you may have to face as an electrification adviser:
1. A neighborhood meeting of about 15 farmers who are new members of the co-op. Some of them are impatient and belligerent at delay in connecting their farms for electricity.
  2. The principal of a high school in your co-op's service area has asked you to speak to the students on what electricity has done to change life on the farm, as part of an assembly program.
  3. You are invited to defend the co-op's tax status at a luncheon meeting of a civic club in a nearby town. You will be followed by a speaker who will present the NTEA position.
  4. At an annual membership meeting of your co-op, which has failed to draw the necessary quorum, you are making a recruiting plea for a membership committee.
  5. In response to your request the board of directors has invited you to present at the regular board meeting a proposal for a newsletter. A majority of the directors have heretofore opposed a newsletter as a needless expense and claimed that "members don't read newsletters anyway".
  6. Your co-op has recently adopted a capital credits plan but it is not yet in operation. At a neighborhood demonstration on electrified fences several of the dozen farmers ask you how capital credits benefit them and if they will get any money out of it.
  7. Three neighbors who dropped into the co-op headquarters call your attention to a wall map showing a proposed new line extension.  
  
They protest to you that this new extension is an expensive proposition which will serve only a few people, and they declare that all the rest of the members will have to pay for the benefits these new members will get.
  8. The manager has asked you to talk at the monthly employees' meeting on member-employee relations. Some of the employees have recently been complaining that "some of these people act as though they owned the lines".



Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

Topic VII. "Suggestions on Making the Talk Itself."

A. Before beginning.

1. Come dressed to suit the occasion. Loud clothing is distracting to an audience. Over-dressing (and for women, the wearing of jangling jewelry) should be avoided. High boots, overalls, and a mackinaw may be appropriate for a neighborhood demonstration in somebody's farmyard. (And a home economist would probably wear a house dress and apron at a kitchen demonstration. To make a report at the annual meeting or to give a talk on school lighting at a PTA meeting, a dark suit (or conservative dress) will be appropriate.
2. Upon arrival find the chairman to let him know you are at hand.
3. Come early enough to familiarize yourself with the meeting place if you have not already seen it.
4. Make sure any props you have asked for, such as maps, blackboard, or slide projector, are ready for use.
5. Talk with the chairman and find out as much as you can about the occasion, audience, and other speakers, if you have not already done this.
6. Study the program to see how well your subject fits with the others. If you are last on a long list of speakers, plan to cut down your own remarks. If you are scheduled immediately before or after an outstanding authority, stay clear of his subject.
7. Should you be part of a panel, discuss the topic in advance to familiarize yourself with other points of view.

B. At the start.

1. Pay close attention to the chairman and other speakers. Being attentive helps you forget your own nervousness and may make you less self-conscious.
2. Be confident as you stand up. Step forward boldly and stand squarely on your feet.
3. Relax consciously and pause momentarily before you begin to speak. Take a deep breath; this gives you a better chance to start in full control of your voice.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

4. Use your first statement to get your audience's attention. Something which a previous speaker has said or some earlier occurrence at the meeting may suggest to you a connection with your topic. An introductory remark of this nature establishes a bond between you and the audience if it is gracefully done.

C. During the talk.

1. While you are speaking you will be concentrating on getting across your message. There may be little opportunity to think about such things as posture, gestures, the quality of your voice. That is why it is necessary to practice speaking until these abilities come naturally when you appear in public.
2. A conversational tone of voice is usually most effective in obtaining acceptance of an idea by the audience. Remember, though, to speak loudly enough to be heard.
3. A change in pace while speaking rests you and the audience and lends emphasis to what you are saying.
4. Be specific. The audience will think that repeated use of general statements which are unsupported by examples or detailed information betrays lack of knowledge or conviction on your part.
5. Avoid wordiness, but remember to restate your main points at least once during your talk.
6. Watch your vocabulary. Avoid trite, worn-out words; avoid slang and words with double meanings. Avoid words which you have difficulty in pronouncing.

D. In conclusion.

1. Don't run overtime.
2. Close on a strong sentence--something which will impel your listeners to take the action you have been urging or to take away with them the mood you have created. Don't spoil your talk by just trailing off. Make your conclusion definite.
3. Be prepared for questioning from the audience. Questions should come through the chair but be answered by the speaker directly. This reduces the embarrassment of poorly worded, ambiguous or hostile questions, and gives the speaker a moment's opportunity to phrase an answer.

Suggested Subject Matter (Cont.)

Topic VIII. "Making a Talk."

In a practice session on speaking you will want to benefit by the suggestions and criticisms of those who listen to you. In a classroom it is possible for the teacher and the other students to tell you aloud just what they don't like about your speaking ability. A less embarrassing procedure is found in the use of an unsigned rating sheet filled in by each person in your practice audience.

A sample of what such a suggested sheet might include follows:

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_

(Put a check mark in the space which most nearly represents your opinion.)

Liked the talk \_\_\_\_\_ Did not like \_\_\_\_\_ Can't decide \_\_\_\_\_

<u>Items judged</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Poor</u>
Posture	_____	_____
Freedom from mannerisms	_____	_____
Clear speech	_____	_____
Pronunciation	_____	_____
Attitude (sincerity, enthusiasm)	_____	_____
Anecdotes or illustrations	_____	_____
Logical development of topic	_____	_____
Convincing ending	_____	_____
Stayed within time	_____	_____

Remarks:

Outstanding strong characteristic:

Outstanding weak characteristic:







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